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MOODS AND MEMORIES

BY

CHARLES L. STORY

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MOODS AND MEMORIES

BY

CHARLES L. STORY

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER

Who left me the heritage of a life right with God and helpful to his fellow-men, and who taught me even as a child that love is rather to be desired than length of days and righteousness than great riches.

FOREWORD

"Count it as a thynge not havynge his full shape, but as it were borne afore hys tyme, even as a thynge begunne rather than fynnesshed."

—WILLIAM TINDALE.

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MEN AND BOOKS

"Fine writing, next to fine doing, is the top thing in the world."—Keats.

THE INESTIMABLE BOON.

To each of us the years benignant bring
Some gift: to one the power to inflame
By voice inspired the souls of men, to wring
From eyes long dry impassioned tears, to make
Minds dormant leap with virile thought, or wake
Men somnolent to deeds of deathless fame.

Unto another cometh skill to paint
With cunning art the colors of the rose
So deftly, that on-lookers catch the faint
Fragrance from honey-laden blossoms shed
What time the clusters pendulous had fed
The bandit bees that all their sweets disclose.

And oftimes he whom the Power Supreme
To thrill the world with word or work denies,
Exultant in his stalwartness of limb,
His lithe and sinewy strength and rugged health,
Complacent, finds a plenitude of wealth
In firm-knit muscles and in clear-lit eyes.

And even to him driven by adverse Fate
To drain the bitter dregs of life, to move
Slowly in torturous anguish, to await
Evasive Fortune with despairing eyes,—
Even to him one gift she ne'er denies:
The inestimable boon—a Mother's Love.

LIKE TO LIKE.

TO W. F. H. AND F. P. J.

If he be not of your kind
Let him go his way and mind
You your own: discord is blind.

But if there be no divorce
In thought or heart or intercourse,
Cleave to him—yea, though by force.

For if one and one there be
Of like kind in their degree
Greet they, glad, as comrades free.

Friends we find not every day,
And when one doth chance our way
Fellowship should have full play.

THE BETROTHED.

(TO A. M. B.)

Ne'er have I seen such perfect joy before
Upon a human countenance expressed.
What yearnings vague, I wonder, stir her breast,
To what far height doth her rapt spirit soar?
Ah, it is sweet to watch the face of her
And see that strange new light within her eyes.
To be betrothed must be paradise
When it such radiant beauty can confer.
And now she doeth innumerable kindnesses
As willingly as if they were for him.
Such power hath Love to transfigure all the dim
Tracts of our lives with self-forgetfulness.
If all were then as beautiful as she,
I would all maids full soon betrothed might be!

TO A PHYSICIAN.

No other craft is quite so loved of men
  As the physician's, whose it is to bring
  Assuaging remedies and everything
To calm life's fret and lift from beds of pain.
'Tis a true poet-craft, for in some phase
  Pain is life's one experience known to all,
  And he who frees a sufferer from its thrall
Writes on that sufferer's heart in noblest phrase.

Thou, Anderson, best type of those who heal,
  Brusque, taciturn, and bluff, and seeming cold,
  Yet quick to help, and kind and genial-souled—
We know who suffer that thou knowest *to feel.*
  The poet's theme must universal be:
  Who shares our pain the truest poet he!

MY NURSE.

Keen-witted, quick-footed,
  Quiet of tongue,
Calm-minded, kind-hearted,
  Deft-handed, strong;
Considerate, cheerful,
  Yet dominant she
And firm in each crisis—
  My good nurse to me!

LITTLE LADY KATHARINE

A little child scarce past her baby days,
With laughing eyes and silken-shadowy hair,
And kissing lips and dimpling features fair,
I meet her often, with her shy, sweet ways.
She prattles gayly while glad laughter plays
Upon her rosebud lips, and sets astir
The hearts of all who chance to look on her
And stoop to chat with her and pet and praise.
She doth not know, this little lady dear,
How she doth lighten many a dreary load,
And by her baby smile make smooth life's road,
And many a racking heartache disappear.
Wearing her innocence like an aureole,
She doth illumine every darkened soul.

TO ELLA.

(AGED ELEVEN.)

E'er keep thy joyous heart,
  Ella, as now;
Never may sorrow cast
  Shade o'er thy brow.

Fair as a lily
  Still thy face gleams;
In thy life's fairyland
  Beautiful dreams

Angels breathe low to thee,
  Hovering around,
Angel wings cover thee
  Slumbering sound.

So may their company
  Ever be given,
So may they finally
  Woo thee to heaven.

IN MEMORIAM.

(THE REV. J. C. SIMMONS, D. D.)

The good gray head is bowed,
  The mobile face is still,
The stately form of strength is shorn,
  Inert the tireless will.

"Dust unto dust" is said,
  The grave is covered o'er;
Turn we lonely from the dead
  Unto life once more.

So he would have us do
  Whom here we leave behind,
Who, to his every duty true,
  Lived for his kind.

And shall we, then, forget
  His godly walks and ways,
The good he wrought, the joy he brought?
  Never, through all our days!

IN MEMORIAM.

He was our pioneer
  When all the paths were dark,
Peace-bringer, and tried comforter,
  True keeper of the ark.

His was the welcome voice,
  Ready with jest and cheer
To bid the stricken soul rejoice
  And free the heart from fear.

He lives forevermore,
  Not only with his Lord,
But in a thousand lives that bore
  Fruitage from his word.

Not cypress boughs nor yew,
  But laurel wreaths we bring,
To deck his brow who heareth now
  The "well done!" of the King.

HAMPTON, MY FRIEND.

I.

"Come, Hampton, come, and seek the Morning Land!"
  In youth the Master, looking on him, smiled,
And Hampton took the loving, outstretched hand
  With the sweet confidence of a little child.
So doth he follow wheresoever led,
  His trust by foolish doubtings undeterred,
And many a faith is quickened that was dead
  And many a life to holier living stirred.
And he is welcome as the glad May sun
  Wherever men still love the better part.
His is a holy life-work well begun.—
  What say you? "Death has stilled that noble heart?"
Ah, no! That ardent spirit onward fares
To do its Master's bidding otherwheres!

II.

Godly his walk and conversation are.
No word of malice from his lips is heard,
He hails God's opportunities afar,
No deed of kindness is by him deferred.
His Master's business him alone beguiles,
Of him his meditation day by day,
And many a child is happier for his smiles,
And many a toiler gladdened on his way.
He may not pause while yet some light is lent
For the fulfillment of the Master's will.
Rest may come later when the day is spent,
Now he must labor with us, for us, still.—
"That day is spent? His spirit quenched in night?"
Ah, no! the dark is here: he hails the Morning Light!

REMINISCENCE.

(After reading "In Terms of Life," by Professor W. W. Thoburn.)

The portals of thy mind were open flung
Unto the truth whence-ever it might come,
And often thy rapt soul was stricken dumb
By that last vision of which Dante sung.
God hadst thou seen and in His presence dwelt,
An High Priest guarding many mysteries:
The song of birds, the laugh of children—these
Were shrines whereat thy kindred spirit knelt.

And yet thine was no life from men apart—
No star withdrawn beyond our utmost ken;
Thou wert our true Confessor of the heart,
And women came to thee and stalwart men,
Burdened with doubts or torn by chastisement,
To learn from thy lips their benign intent.

THE SCHOLAR.

TO E. F.

Full many roam through Time's fair garden plot,
  Forgetful of the gardener and his toil,
And pluck the delicate clusters that were not
  Had he not striven with the grudging soil.

TO BOOKS.

I would that I could speak in praise of you
  Something, unpenned by greater ones than I,
  To thrill the soul and reinspire the high
Resolve in men to feed of you anew.
Alas! how feeble are the powers to do
  Of us poor little ones, who humbly sit
  And worship dumbly what the Masters writ
In words of flame of what is good and true!
Ah! when we bend with glad, tear-brimming eyes
  O'er their strong pages, let us not forget
  The chastisement of grief and keen regret,
The pangs of want, the relentless agonies,
  Ere Homer, Dante, their large words indite:
  Only in their hearts' blood do the Immortals write.

CHILD'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Soon, alas, too soon!—will come the heat and burden
of the day,
Let them in life's golden morning dream the long
glad hours away;
Rapt to fairie lands of fancy, turn the page with fresh
delight;
Thrill with all the fire and valour of their favorite
"parfyt knyght,"
Free beleaguered castles, champion friendless beauty,
or with zest
Follow some gallant adventurer on his lonely peri-
lous quest,
Give them BOOKS, these youthful dreamers, filled
with deeds of high emprise,
So the vision shall not fail them when the rose of
morning dies,
But the splendor of its seeming that uplighted all
the dawn
Through their lives shall linger with them—at their
deaths shall lure them on!

TO VICTOR HUGO.

August, aggressive, and superbly strong,
  Valiant of voice, of visage leonine,
Inveterate foe to every fraud and wrong,
  VICTOR—how fit was that first name of thine!
For it was thy stern indignation lashed
  Smug shamdom and conventional pretense,
From thy relentless satire slunk abashed
  Subservient Law in abject impotence.

Yet spite of caustic pen and mien austere,
  Thou wert a man beneficently mild;
Thy great heart burned with love, to thee were dear
  The wretched outcast and the orphaned child.
Noblesse oblige!—"Saint Welcome," this must be
More than a motto ere Man may be free!

GOETHE.

As the lone watcher on some mountain height,
  Uplifted far beyond the haunts of men,
Pierces the vast profound with searching ken
  To read the mystery of the starry night;
So, poet, did'st thou probe the living soul:
  With eye undazzled, mind dispassionate,
Weighing the mysteries of Growth and Fate—
  Weaving their message in one cosmic whole.

Goethe, keen-eyed astronomer of song,
  Let quibbling critics carp and call thee cold;
To us who know thee thou art genial-souled
  And lovable;—one unto whom belong
  Self-poise and calm reserve, yet none the less
  Warm-dropping tears and depth of tenderness.

HAWTHORNE.

No mortal eye e'er peered into his soul,
To whom the heart's deep-hidden springs were known,
To whose keen gaze men's sins were as a scroll:
As at his death, so all his life, alone.

THOREAU AT WALDEN.

With Nature's very self held'st rapt commune,
  Shy recluse, who did'st dwell so long remote
From fellow-habitants. Her rarest boon
  To thee she gave: to know the variant note
Of bird or insect; in thy tiny pond
  Find ocean's plenitude; learn all the lore
Of this mysterious earth; and then beyond,
  In steadfast lonely meditation, pore
On air-borne secrets hid from lamp-bleared eyes
  And only legible to them like thee
That lead their lives beneath the star-strewn skies
  And live as if *this* were the life to be.
Still, though thou wert so lost in solitude,
True prophet to our shackled humanhood!

TO GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

To that choice company dost thou belong
  Of kindred spirits—Fielding, rare old Ben,
  Bluff Samuel, good Sir Walter—manly men
Who make our earth the gladder for their song
And sturdy pleasantry when things go wrong.
  (Such sanely optimistic men as these
  Are like the ozone-laden ocean breeze
That sweeps the foul-aired tenements among.)

No sudden-blazing meteor art thou,
  Grudging thy sparkles to the frore gray earth;
  Rather the hearth-fire bringing warmth and mirth,
Smoothing its furrows from the care-knit brow.
  Quaint Maister Chaucer, perfect though thy art,
  We prize far more thy rugged homely heart.

AFTER READING CERTAIN OLD ENGLISH ROMANCES.

I.

I love to read these tales of old romance:
  How Florice fought for lovely Blanchefleur,
  And hewed down Ajoub's son, the horrid Moor,
And spitted swarthy Paynims on his lance,
Or how the valorous Guy of Warwick bore
  At his Felice's whimsical command,
  His shield in joust and tourney for her hand
Against that recreant caitiff, Morgadour,
Or how Sir Bevis, brave knight of Hamptoun,
  With 's steed Arundel and good sword Morglay,
  Bore from Sir Miles the fair Josyan away,
And slaughtered them that 'lieved on false Mahoun.
  Sure these were men right worthy of our praise—
  These stalwart heroes of the ancient days.

II.

I love, I say, these tales of olden time,
  Crude though they be and full of lust and blood,
  They thrill me with their touch of knighthood,
Quaint courtesy, and energy sublime.
Stern though they seemed and full of fierce despite,
  Yet were these knights possessed of virtues tried.
  No idle dalliance, no weak foolish pride
Stained the escutcheon that they bore of right.
Sometimes, 'tis true, they struck before they thought—
  But yet they struck!—Ah ye who weakly cower
  In feeble vacillation, seize thy hour!
Think how they strove—how hardily they wrought,
  And from thy torpor rouse for very shame,
  Lest ye be branded with a coward's name.

HEATHER, IVY, AND YEW.

This tiny sprig o' heather 's been
Beside the banks o' Loch Katrine,
This ivy-leaf erewhile hath grown
By Burns's Brig o' Bonnie Doon,
This yew funereal o'er the grave
Of Wordsworth drooped, by Rotha's wave.

One tells a tale of bold Romance,
One whispers of Love's tender glance,
One sighs o'er Death's grim residence.

Each guards its own dark mystery:
Life, Love, or future Destiny.

KIPLING.

"HYSTERICAL RHAPSODIST OF FORCE."

As strives some vulgar parvenu to win
  Station among his nobler fellow-kind
  By clink of coin, though poor in spirit and mind,
Even so doth Kipling strive to enter in
To Art's great temple—to that hallowed fane
  Wherein true poets worship the high Muse;
  Utters his tinsel phrase, hurls low abuse,
Tries every paltry method. But disdain
Doth greet each clamorous effort: calm and still
  Those priests of Beauty bar the sacred door
  And chant her varied praise, and him ignore,
Letting him plead in vain, or storm at will.
  No; Kipling! juggler of cheap jingo wit,
  That shrine is shut: thou may'st not enter it!

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

I.

Glad fellow-farer through the wilds of life,
  Undaunted heartener of the weak and faint,
  Human of humans, yet without a taint
Of the irreverence that is now so rife;
Intrepid wanderer through the sunlit lands
  Of high romance, well-tried adventurer,
  Hero in many a hard-fought Holy War
'Gainst gloom, disease, and impotence of hands;
Chivalric counsellor in youth's brave emprise,
  What word of thine but cheers us toward life's goal,
  Kindling in us the same indomitable soul
That ever smiled from thy courageous eyes?
  Loyal and lovable, self-poised and free,
  O gallant R. L. S., our gratitude to thee!

II.

As our Bay sea-gulls o'er the windy deep
  Skim with their light deft touch the waters dun
  And ever flash quick glints of the bright sun
From their broad wings that rhythmically sweep,
So, Optimist, amidst the buffeting
  Of tortured breast and racking fever-pain,
  With laugh at lip and quip of ready brain,
And stalwart faith, did'st face Death's reckoning.
Not as the fool, with venomed scoff and sneer,—
  A coward's trick!—did'st jest at his grim call,
  But as the brave man fighting till he fall—
His rapier at fence 'gainst caitiff fear.
  Wounds in the front, face lifted to the dawn,
  So did'st thou fight and fall, beloved Stevenson!

TO AN INCESSANT READER.

"Farewel my boke and my devocioun!"—Chaucer.

Down with thy volume! Calleth the blue sea,
And the green wood, and the crisp, tingling air;
And, best of all, thy love inviteth thee
With her to roam amid yon prospect fair.

Down with thy volume. What are joys of books
Beside the blisses of all out-of-doors?
Is he not mad, who, shunning ferny nooks,
In some close room o'er printed pages pores?

Dear is the heritage of books, I wot,
And ministrant to many holy needs;
But must for them life's birthright be forgot
Ere yet our youth's World Beautiful recedes?

Best poets' loves are but as idle dreams
Save as they mirror thine who waiteth thee,
And as mere phantoms Arden's groves and streams
To them that thou mayst with *thy* Ros'lind see.

Go! learn from Nature what books ne'er can teach,
And from thy love what Nature ne'er revealed;
That is true wisdom. Seek it, I beseech,
And thy new lore by her dear lips be sealed!

TIMES AND SEASONS

"Ah, yes, it is a goodly thing
One year to live, one song to sing."

IN PRAISE OF MISTRESS SPRING.

Hark ye, my masters, hear me sing
  My rollicking glee to Mistress Spring—
The blithest, breeziest, mad-cap thing
  We've met with in our frolicking!

Ay, that she is, but more—she's rude!
  Her knuckles rap each stinging cheek,
Her biting kisses nip the blood,
  Her fingers our red noses tweak.

And yet she is a humorous lass,
  A rare good-natured one, I ween;
We smile and turn to see her pass
  When she frisks merrily on the scene.

In brief, sirs, hers is woman's mood,
  A veritable Protean thing;
Wooer of the black depths o' the wood,
  Wooer of its sun-flecked burgeoning.

Betimes all melancholy wise,
  She sheds the softest tears that fall,
And shyly with her pleading eyes
  Entreats your pity for it all.

Then off she flits, with roguish smile,
  Adown some leafless woodland lane;
And you, fond dolt, are left the while
  Dripping disconsolate in the rain.

Thus all compact of wind and sun,
  Thus tearful is my tricksy jade—
Tell me, my masters, know you one
  More charming than this elfish maid?

Flirt? Ay, you're right. Yet I opine
  She 's worthy well your worshiping.
Come, clink me your glasses, masters mine—
  A jolly good health to Mistress Spring!

She'll brim with rare red wine the glass,
  Thrill o' new life and laughter bring.
A buxom, heartsome, generous lass,
  I warrant ye—my Mistress Spring!

SPRING SONG.

O the beauty of the Spring!
Everything
Feels a thrill of life redundant,
And the birds
In their bursts of song abundant
Phrase the words
Of a matchless litany.
Father, we would also praise Thee
For the Spring.

O the beauty of the Spring!
Grief took wing
At the sight of greening grasses
And the gold
Of the hillside poppy masses,
Which unfold
To the kisses of the sun
Even as our hearts have done
To the Spring.

SPRING SONG.

O the beauty of the Spring
Burgeoning!
Hints untold of life eternal
Here abide
In these clouds of incense vernal
Wafting wide
Their delicate perfume
From white banks of orchard bloom
In the Spring.

O the beauty of the Spring!
It doth bring
Vision of the glorious Being
Who doth rule
Men and seasons, dreams and seeing.
Is there fool
Who would fail to thank the Father
For His gift of gracious weather
Through the Spring?

EASTER IN ENGLAND.

Red poppies burn where wintry winds blew cold,
  O'er the calm lake the swallows dip and sing,
  The air is fragrant with all blossoming,
And scent of fresh-turned earth on fertile wold.
The naked limbs that barred the bleak, gray sky,
  Like gaunt survivors of some famine scene,
  Thrust forth now tender shoots of vivid green,
And in their new warmth comfortably sigh.
Hark! how the lark his carol merrily trills,
  And all exultant navigates the blue
  Vast vault of space. Our souls, do they not, too,
Aspire even unto Heaven? Through them it thrills
  As through all Nature, this one trumpet cry:
  "I am the Life, the Resurrection, I!"

MAYTIME.

Mid-month of May,
  Fit time to woo,
A perfect day,
  Myself and you.

A woodland nook
  Where we two sit,
A pleasant book,
  You reading it.

You turn a page
  And then the next
But I am sage—
  You are my text.

On you I pore,
  O poem mine!
Con o'er and o'er
  Each dainty line.

I watch the air
  Play hide-and-seek,
Kissing your hair,
  Flushing your cheek.

Your tapering arm
  So white, so cool,
And every charm
  Make me Love's tool.

Soon I am bent—
  In vain!—to look
On eyes intent
  Upon their book;

Until I'm free
  No more to wait,
Love's jealousy
  Drives me his gait.

I seize your wrist
  The book falls down,
Your lips I've kissed
  Despite your frown.

I kiss again
  Your glowing face,
(Ah me!) and then
  You I embrace.

My arms I've wound
  About your waist,
Your hair's unbound,
  Your hat misplaced.

Meantime the book
  Unheeded lies,
You deign no look—
Love dims your eyes!

Staid Wisdom flits,
  Distraught, away,
Sweet Folly sits
  Enthroned this day.

Let Learning gray
  Keep musty schools,
Mid-month of May
  Dan Cupid rules!

Yet what reck we?
  Love shall, I wis,
Our good king be:
  Sweetheart, a kiss!

[illegible]

What delight with [illegible]
[illegible] alone in dream—
And I languorous [illegible]
There [illegible] trees [illegible]
Lingering [illegible] [illegible]
Listening to [illegible]
And the eaves [illegible]
Their low-whispered [illegible]
To us who [illegible]
By the slow low-[illegible]
Stretched at ease upon [illegible]
Nibbling dates [illegible]
Often have I longed to [illegible]
Thus with you in [illegible]

Look, dear, is that Oberon
Just returned from Hebron,
Or is it Ariel
Tripping down yon leafy dell
Hark! those feet that nobly ran!
Surely that was Jolly Pan
And his merry Satyr crew

ET IN ARCADIA EGO.

Up to mischief, doubtless, too!
Dreaming am I? Maybe so
(Tho' 'tis difficult to know—
This dim grove of ancient oak
Is haunt so fit for faerie folk!);
Dream moods are no rarity
To them that visit Arcady!

Here I love to be, dear heart,
With you from all the world apart
(Sad world, with its pain and fret
And vain endeavor to forget!);
Thro' the long, long summer hours
Weaving wreaths of wildwood flowers—
Fern and fragrant violet,
With the morning dew still wet,
And these crimson poppies rare—
For your wind-tossed, shadowy hair.
Ah, if you could be content
In Arden groves of banishment
Thus to linger, dear, with me
In Love's Land of Arcady!

MIDSUMMER IN ENGLAND.

Poppies are flaming in fields of rye,
  Scarlet and silver together.
A tremulous heat-haze veils the sky:
  It is sultry July weather.

In a nook reclined, where the cooling wind
  Wafts me woodland odors sweet
From banks of thyme, I catch the chime
  Of the runlet at my feet.

The rushes tall are my citadel,
  Whence dreamily I spy
On the garrulous rooks in the storm-riven oaks
  And the red deer browsing by.

So the moments pass in the long lush grass
  And the night-stars deck the sky.
Till dusk from dawn I linger on
  In this mid-month of July.

In our desperate haste o'er the arid waste
  Our feet have daily trod,
Often, I think, we forget to drink
  At these oases of God.

EXILED.

My heart is where the heather blooms
  Afar on rough Ben Ledi's side,
'Tis where the shaggy Trossach glooms
  Above Loch Katrine's silvery tide.
A wanderer I from Scotia far,
Yet home and heart still with her are.

Her bonnie braes I yearn to see,
  Her burns that bicker 'neath the sun;
Her misty islands beckon me,
  Her birken groves and bracken dun;
Her highlands lure me from afar,
Her vales than which none fairer are.

Her golden morns and purpling eves,
  Her brakes of fern and craggy dens—
Ah, how my exiled spirit grieves
  Again to roam those shadowy glens!
Whate'er dread weird my body dooms,
My heart is where the heather blooms.

"THE CALL OF THE WILD."

From the tumult and surge of the market
  And the shifty business ways
In the devious paths of traffic
  Where brother on brother preys;

From the heated glare of the pavement
  And the foul stench of the stews,
Where to live is death, and worse than death,
  And to win is ever to lose;

I turn to thy wind-swept spaces,
  O Country of the West!
Hearing the call of thy highlands
  With the white snow on each crest.

Ah, this is no vagrant yearning
  For ease and idleness,
No coward flight from the clash of strife—
  This hunger for things that bless:

For the uplift of stately mountains,
  Thick-set with fir and pine;
For the keen clean air of the cloudlands
  And the earth-tang sweet and fine.

"THE CALL OF THE WILD."

A call to the heights of effort,
  And renewal of brave desires,—
Ideals long stifled and smothered
  By ashes that once were fires.

Yes, back to the fresh green woodlands
  And their rivers swift and wide,
Where the heart is cleansed and strengthened
  And the spirit purified!

LOAFING.

I lie outstretched upon the grass
And watch the white cloud-galleons pass—
Brave argosies that proudly sweep
The illimitable blue of heaven's deep.
Around me hum the honey-bees
Intent upon their piracies
Of sweets from every wayside flower—
Rare essences of sun and shower.
In the tall trees, with ravished ear,
The wind antiphonal I hear,
And from his airy eyrie, hark!
The impromptu melody of the lark,
And the uninterrupted whir
From the meadowland of the harvester.

And all my other senses thrill
With the life joyous. Lo, the rill
How it doth twinkle where the light
Falls on its bubbling waters bright,
And see the glimmering of the trees
Their green leaves tossed by the gusty breeze,
And watch the patterns that the sun

LOAFING.

Weaves on the shadow-dappled lawn.
And, ah! the scent of the violet,
The honey-suckle, and wild-rose, met
In one waft of perfume wondrous sweet!
And how as my clasped fingers meet
In the cool lush grasses my pulses stir,
And on my cheek how warm the air!

O the joy of living! Glorious boon
When one may lie in the fields at noon,
And loaf away the hours until
The night is come, at his own sweet will!

ON HILLS OF PINE.

In this sequestered nook
  Spicy azaleas blow,
Beside this roistering brook
  The red-ripe berries glow,—
Here through the stately trees
  That sigh in coy delight
Soft steals the wooing breeze,
  Caressing in its flight.
Tall pillared aisles of pines
  In lengthening lines extend,
Embraced by tendriled vines
  That, tenuous, coil and blend
Fantastic tangled arms
  With boles columnar, vast,
Shielding their delicate charms
  From the storm king's blast.
From the glimmering glades
  Fails the golden light,
Darker fall the shades
  Of the hastening night;
From the mountains hoar

ON HILLS OF PINE.

The colors fade and die
As the sun drops lower
Down the western sky.
From the ravine a cadence
Silvery clear, yet low,
Like a song of maidens—
'Tis the river's flow.
Fit place this for dreams,
By tranquil peace possessed,
Fit time for starry gleams
Or calm communion blest.

"THALATTA!"

Ah, the sea, the sea!
It is there I'd be
Where the black storm-clouds are scowling,
And the great waves rave
In each hollow cave,
And the gale is madly howling.

It is good to lie
'Neath an azure sky
In a meadow-land of the valleys,
Or on beds of fern
By some mountain burn
That bickers and frets and dallies.

But 't is best to be
By the glorious sea
And hear its thundering surges
That sweep and crash
On the sands and dash
In foam where the cliff emerges.

NEAR MONTEREY.

Cold, black rocks in the gray of evening,
  Great waves breaking in clouds of spray;
Out from the heart of the crimson sunset
  A lone gull winging its landward way.

Side by side on our cairn together
  We two there in the waning light:
Before us the turbulent ocean reaches,
  Behind us the sand dunes, still and white.

In a niche of the cliff we linger, silent.
  Swiftly the curtains of night are drawn,
And the rough, salt breeze beats in our faces,—
  Yet we watch the billows tossing on.

Is it a dream that I remember,
  Or ghost of some joy that shall be no more;
You and I on the beach together—
  Dusk—and the darkening ocean shore?

AUTUMN WALK IN CALIFORNIA.

I

Morning.

The country road, dew-moistened, stretches on
  Past scattered farms that hushed and lifeless lie.
  Faded and bleak is the gray morning sky—
Then sudden in the east the flush of dawn.
From every chimney now blue smoke-wreaths come;
  Ruddy and fresh the farmer-lads appear,
  And enter on their tasks with ready cheer,
And everywhere is heard life's busy hum.
Chickens are cackling for their 'customed grain,
  Horses are whinnying, eager to be fed,
  The lowing cattle stampede from the shed,
A hare leaps up and scurries down the lane.
  Better the dawn than beat of wakening drums:
  All life is quickened when the glad sun comes.

II.

Noon.

Dusty and hot the road still stretches on
  Indefinite to distant woodland ways;
  O'er all the landscape lies a tremulous haze;
Remorselessly beats down the noonday sun.
Thirsty and faint, imagination sees
  Mirages all-alluring. The heart thrills
  To be once more among the shadowy hills,
And quaff the coolness of the sheltering trees.
Vain is the vision memory fondly yields.
  The locust drowses out his droning whir,
  The far-off hills become a misty blur,
The hot sun shimmers on the stubble fields;
  Even the crow has hushed his noisy caws.
'Tis Nature's breathing space—the world's at pause.

III.

Night.

The white road glimmers, faintly stretching on,
  Then fades into the dusk. The crescent moon
  Sinks slowly, and all nature seems aswoon,
Exhausted by the irksome day just gone.
The blackness grows intenser hour by hour,
  Its silence all unbroken by a sound,
Except the mournful howling of some hound.
It is the time when lonely thoughts o'er-power.
Hushed are the fields at dawn athrill with song,
  When life exulted under morning skies;
  Only the ghostly eucalyptus sighs.
And, as we stumble wearily along,
  A light from each farm window dimly glows:
  The tired world is seeking its repose.

THE GOLDEN-ROD.

The hills are hidden by a haze,
The veil of Indian summer days,
And every harvest furrow hath
The green of autumn aftermath—
A vivid setting fresh from God
To fitly frame the golden-rod.

The autumn air is mild and warm,
And honey bees, a droning swarm,
Swift as the arrow from the bow
Speed with their burdens to and fro
From many a dragon-lily pod
And tuft of fragrant golden-rod.

The light that ripples through the leaves
Upon the velvet greensward weaves
A rare design of shade and sun
That alters ere 'tis scarce begun,
And gilds refined gold where nod
The tall plumes of the golden-rod.

THE GOLDEN-ROD.

The scarlet maples flash and flame,
The purple asters put to shame
The painter's most resplendent hue.
The gentians vie with heaven's blue,
And every foot of upland sod
Is radiant with the golden-rod.

I love to lie and take mine ease
Beneath these branching woodland trees,
Where fancy doth not strive in vain
To find the Golden Age again,
For foot ne'er fairer country trod
Than this where grows the golden-rod.

THANKSGIVING.

We thank, Thee, Lord, for all Thou hast
  Of blessing to us given,
For precious memories of the past
  And gracious hopes of heaven;

We thank Thee for our Nation's peace
  Employed for righteous ends,
For fireside comforts that increase—
  Home-ties, and books, and friends;

We thank Thee for the prospering
  Of our material store,
But for our spirit's strengthening,
  Dear Lord, we thank Thee more:

For patience in the midst of pain,
  And trust through test of tears,
For faith thy Face shall smile again
  In thine own year of years;

And most of all for Thy stern laws
  That spur to high endeavor—
Those inward goads that give no pause,
  But urge us upward ever.

THANKSGIVING.

That whatso'er the heights we've gained
  We hold them in derision,
Still striving for the unattained—
  The splendor of the Vision!

For thwarted efforts, baffled will,
  Vain schemes of our decreeing,
The reason for whose failure still
  Evades our finite seeing.

BENEDICITE.

Bless thou the Lord, my heart, and bring
To Him thy grateful worshiping
  On this Thanksgiving Day.
For He hath led thee through the year,
And momently hath made appear
His love and care for thee more clear.
  Bless thou thy Lord.

Thank thou the Lord, my heart, and give
Him all thy powers while thou dost live—
  Yes, gladly, every day.
So shalt thou keep serene nor be
Fearful of aught that happeneth thee,
But each hour further reason see
  To thank thy Lord.

Praise thou the Lord, my heart, and sing
His love past all imagining
  In all things to thy good.
For all things, heart, He ordereth:
Desired Life or dreaded Death—
Strength to face both He furnisheth.
  Praise thou thy Lord.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

The stars are keenly glittering,
  The moon is riding high,
The wind is softly shepherding
  Cloud-flocks across the sky,
The snowy fields are glimmering bright
Beneath the moonbeam's frosty light.

It is the holy night whereon
  The Prince of Peace was born,
The night when darkness turned to dawn,
  When midnight was as morn,
And Heaven's own glory was revealed
To shepherds watching in the field.

It is the night the Magi came
  From Orient lands afar
To do obeisance to his name
  Led by the wondrous Star,
And precious gifts of gold and myrrh
And frankincense on him confer.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

O Lord, if but to our dim eyes,
  Purblind because of sin,
A vision such as theirs might rise
  And stir our hearts within!
Might we but such a portent see,
Perchance we, too, should worship thee.

Yea, give us, Lord, the guiding star
  To find the Holy Child,
And we, weak mortals as we are,
  And sinful and defiled,
Will follow fain the heavenly light
That shone on that first Christmas night.

The stars are keenly glittering,
  The moon is riding high,
The wind is softly shepherding
  Cloud-flocks across the sky.
And hark! those voices from afar!
And lo! within my breast a star!

THE STAR.

The Wise Men saw a thousand stars
  Effulgent over them,
But fixed their eyes on one: the Star
  Of Bethlehem.

A thousand bright and shining names
  The skies of history gem,
But wise men fix on one: the Christ's
  Of Bethlehem.

THE BOOK OF THE RED ROSE

"For love is heaven's very atmosphere."

—David Starr Jordan.

THE GREATEST OF THESE.

"Love is the only synonym in our earthly speech for immortality."

'Tis Love alone can make life's work complete.
Ere long shall come the setting of the sun
And this brief day of our great task be done
(Ah, task of life, how strangely bitter-sweet!).
There will be folded hands, lips without breath,
But we shall have passed on—*Love knows no death!*

A COMPLEYNT TO CUPID.

Cupid, thou cruel elf,
  And all unjust,
Why hast thou sorely wounded thus myself
  That now I must
Feel in my breast the rankle of thy dart,
Although thou dost not deign to pierce my Lady's heart?

Cupid, thou art unfair
  To me, to her,
That all unfeeling she 's thus made to bear—
  No pulse astir—
The mad infatuation of my heart,
But I her high disdain, though wounded by thy dart!

Nay, Cupid, be more kind
  To both, I pray;
That sting which in my heart doth lodgment find
  Or pluck away,
Or else within my Lady's breast thy dart
Implant, that she may likewise feel Love's rankling smart!

MY VALENTINE.

The day 's at hand yclept St. Valentine's,
When every lover to his lady pays
Some tribute of true love, and in her praise
Strives to indite some well-beseeming lines.
But what is worthy of my Lady dear?
Words cannot tell her tenderness and grace,
Nor the sweet beauty of her winsome face,
Nor have I aught that she would prize, I fear—
She unto whom the whole world well might kneel
In worship of the charms she doth reveal!
And yet, some token I would fain confer.
My heart's my all! It will I send to her
And bid her keep it as her Valentine.
Ah, would that she might send me hers in interchange
for mine!

WITH A GIFT OF ROSES.

With a red red rose in her shadowy hair,
And her rose-red mouth and her features fair,
And her precious eyes and her peerless grace,
I would I might gaze on my Lady's face.
And so for her I am thinking of
In the red, red leaves of this rose of love
(May *her* love be my whole life's comforter!)
I have folded my heart and I send it her.
Ah, would that mine were the right to insist
That she wear it in token of true-love tryst
In her beautiful hair when tonight we meet,
That so I might claim her my own, my sweet!

LOVE'S PLEA.

Beloved, though you love not me at all,
  Who am not worthy of your tenderness,
  Nor aught deserving of your least caress,
Think! It is Love, not I, unto you call.

And if not me, you must learn to love Love,
  For Love's life's all, and if it pleading come
  Entreating in your heart its proper home,
Will you rebuff it, scourge it forth to rove?

Remember, though the lover uplifts on high
  In worship her pure soul his heart holds dear
  (As is most fit), yet he himself dwells near
That shrine, and is the holier made thereby.
  To love uplifts even as beloved to be;
  Then love not me, Beloved, but love my love for thee!

INCERTITUDE.

Naught know I of those facile sophistries
  Whereby men heal love's unrequited smart
  And banish true affection from the heart,
Nor would I learn their paltry remedies.
This do I know: my Love I sought to win
  Not by false vows and fickle gallantry,
  Appealing to my Lady's vanity,
But in good faith her heart would enter in.
Yet she hath told me with all seriousness,
  And not (I thank her!) with sly flatteries,
  Luring me on by subtle coquetries,
My suit hath not yet won its wished success.
And so I know not what to do at all.
  My love remains,—it burns my breast like fire!—
  And yet she will not yield to my desire
Although she knows what torments me befall.
  Still I can blame her not—but, oh, that she
  May prove compassionate to my misery!

FOR MY LADY'S BIRTHDAY.

This spray of waxen lilies
  Dear heart, accept from me,
They are so fair and stainless that
  They mind me, dear, of thee.

And hyacinths I send you,
  Still wet with morning dew,
They have not half the sweetness,
  My own sweetheart, of you.

Nor shun these crimson roses
  With petals all aflame,
Love must be something more than sweet
  Else is it but a name.

Take, too, these tiny violets,
  Sky-azure in their hue,
To tell the single-heartedness,
  Love, of my love for you.

And lastly these carnations.
  They do not wither fast,
But typify true constancy:
  Best love is love to last!

WON'T YOU BE MY COMRADE?

Dear, I'd call you comrade
If you were my wife,
Cheering me and dearing me
Down the ways of life;

Holding me and folding me
When the days were gray,
Nesting me and jesting me
When emerald bloomed the May;

Meeting me and greeting me
When I came at night,
Kissing me and missing me
At the morning light.

Ever in good fellowship
We should fare together;
Fearless, front with frolic hearts
Glad or gusty weather.

For my chum through all my life,
Love, I choose but you:
Won't you be my comrade,
Trusty, stanch, and true?

TWO SONNETS.

I.

MY LADY BEAUTIFUL.

My Lady whom I love is very fair.
God in his goodness made her to the sight
Beyond all language beautiful. Her white
White brow lies calm beneath her wind-blown hair
Which ever in dusk masses teasingly,
In tempting disarray, strays o'er a face
Fairer than painter's vision in its trace
Of winsome tenderness and purity.
Her body, too, hath beauties manifold.
Stately God wrought it with divinest art,
Yet grace and graciousness he did impart.
Ah, yes; my Lady 's lovely to behold!
And yet these charms that set my pulse astir
Seem naught beside the clean, sweet heart of her!

II.

MY LADY BOUNTIFUL.

My Lady is as good as she is fair.
Immaculate as Virtue's self is she,
Yet warm of heart and rich in sympathy,
Pity and kindliness her constant care.
Honor and Truth attend her everywhere
As her handmaidens, and sincerity
And gracious speech and cheerful industry
Thrill with their sweetness the environing air.
Trust hath she, too, in God's strong hand to guide
With loving-kindness the affairs of men,
And Prayer is hers to One beyond our ken,
And Faith, and Hope, and Peace with her abide.
True Vestal she, yet Woman every whit,
Love's flame hath stirred!—oh, may she cherish it!

AN OLDEN TALE.

The birds are singing,
The bees are winging,
And honey bringing
From flower to hive;
The sun is beaming,
The lake is gleaming,
And good 'tis seeming
To be alive.

Upon the masses
Of meadow grasses
Where the brook passes
Murmuring clear,
We two are lying
No word replying
But my Love's sighing
Is sweet to hear.

Nor sad nor merry,
Idly we tarry,
While chipmunks wary
Scurry around;

AN OLDEN TALE.

Lost in day-dreaming
Love only esteeming
And as is seeming
    Making no sound.

Life's fret is over,
Heart heart may discover,
A maid and her lover
    Vow to be true,
Here is no glory
Save only the hoary
Age-olden story
    Of Love told anew.

MY LADY'S GARDEN.

My Lady had a garden in her heart
  Full of tall lilies pale and virginal,
  And roses white with waxen petals all,
Which only a faint perfume did impart.

Peaceful and still slept that dim garden-close,
  Unknown to men by gaudier fancies led,
  Mystic, enchanted, hushed, unvisited,
Until one day I chanced it to disclose.

Led by the lily-bells that topped the wall,
  Their stainless chalices lifted to the sun,
  And the faint garden-scent, like as when one
Feels a loved hand on his hot forehead fall.

I entered that sequestered nook with awe,
  That nook till then to maiden fancies given,
  And turned my tired eyes to the pure blue
    heaven,
And breathed a prayer of thanks for what I saw:

MY LADY'S GARDEN.

A plot so lovely that my soul did thrill,
  Even though virgin-white slept every rose.
  Then while I gazed, lo! all the garden-close
Reddened with roseate blushes, lovelier still!

No longer now doth that sweet garden-close
  Sleep in seclusion, white, and hushed, and calm,
  But far and wide it wafts an odorous balm,
And everywhere Love's red, red rosebud blows!

MY COMRADE.

I do possess a constant comrade now,
My spirit's comforter,
My heart her its true keeper doth avow,
Worship and follow her.

I never stroll at dawn through greening fields
But my Love walks with me,
No honeyed scent the dew-wet clover yields
Is half so sweet as she.

I never gird myself unto the task
Of the hard work-a-day
But in the solace of her smile I bask,
And drudgery is play.

I never sit at dusk to write a line
But that my Love is there,
Her hand I feel caressingly in mine,
Or stroke her dear, dear hair.

Morning and noon and afternoon and night,
My Beautiful is near,
A heaven-sent minister to my heart's delight,
An angel-guardian dear.

MY COMRADE.

With the calm presence of her spirit fair
  Life's fret and fever cease.
God keep thee near me, dearest, everywhere,
  For where thou art is peace!

THE SONG.

What shall it be, sweetheart, what shall it be,
That I shall sing, O my loved one, of thee?
Shall it be praise of thy beauty so fine
Thrilling me through like the rarest of wine;
Shall it be praise unto Him who hath given
Thee purity like to the angels of heaven;
Shall it be joy in thine infinite charm
From the tone of thy voice to the curve of thine arm,
Shall it be homage to all that thou art,
O ministrant hand, O compassionate heart
What shall it be, sweetheart, what shall it be?
Nay, this be my theme: She loves me, she loves me!
Echo it, echo it, winds of the sky—
She hath named me her choice. It is I, it is I!

THE SILENCES OF LOVE.

Love ever deals in subtle indirection
For fear its sweet
And vagrant hints of delicate suggestion
Their death should meet.

It needs no iteration oft outspoken
In formal phrase:
Vows made too ardently are often broken
In after days.

Yet love hath means of proving mystic union
Apart from speech,
And heart with heart may hold a rapt communion
Though wordless each.

Fond looks from fond eyes or warm hands' tender pressure
May tell the whole,
And bear delight beyond all earthly measure
From soul to soul.

THE SILENCES OF LOVE

Silence except for red lips' low sweet sighing
Reveal as well
The vast content of faith on faith relying
As voice could tell.

Nay, Love hath moments of such hallowed passion
When speechless 'tis
That converse were all impotent to fashion
Gladness like this.

And so when oft I sit in voiceless rapture
Beside you, dear,
Know I keep silent angel strains to capture,
For heaven's near!

A LITTLE LYRIC.

Ah, the old world is so wondrous fair!
Violets, hyacinths, everywhere
Breathe fragrance on the April air,
  And the daffodils flame at my feet;
Fountains laugh in their silvery flow,
Winds in the tree-top whisper low,
And the wild birds never caroled so—
  For I love, and the world is sweet!

Grief that was mine with its rankling sting,
Life's chafe and fretful murmuring,
Failure and pain and everything
  That leaves us incomplete,
Have fled and the skies o'er-head are blue,
Life is fair and men are true,
And all, dear heart, because I've found you—
  For I love, and the world is sweet!

SOMETIMES YOUR EYES ARE VERY WISTFUL, DEAR.

I.

Sometimes your eyes are very wistful, dear,
  As if you felt a yearning in your heart—
  A yearning that doth make the quick tears start
And bear you far away from Now and Here.
Sweet, is it girlhood memories that you keep
  Cherishing them still faintly in your breast?
  Or is it dream of some enthralling quest—
Some high emprise in Art—not lulled asleep?
Or some dim-stirring fancy, sweet and pure,
  Like scent of rosemary or old lavender,
  Always to live a maiden life, nor bear
The name of Wife nor Mother-pangs endure?
What wistful, vague desire your heart doth move?
Nay, dear, 'tis this: You yearn—you yearn—*to love!*

II.

For never shall a woman's heart be glad
  Until she holds within herself the key
  To all life's wonder and felicity—
Until the peerless Rose of Love is had.
For this give all, dear! It alone is worth
  A woman's life. For this to lay life down—
  Give utterly herself and her life's crown—
She glories: 'tis her one delight on earth.
Living to be beloved is well, but all
  The calm delight of being loved doth move
  How infinitely less than this—*to love!*
To heed the wondrous though irrational call—
  Miraculously sweet!—and yield outright,
  All unreluctant, as Love's acolyte.

CONSUMMATION.

Dearest, I wandered long before I found
  Thee who in happy visions of the night
  Often in dreams thrilled my prophetic sight,
Long, long before my life by thee was crowned.
Look in mine eyes, Beloved! Is it true,
  I ask myself, that I enfold thee now
  And stroke thy dear hair from thy peerless brow—
Thine, Love, for whom I searched the wide world through?
Glad consummation of my heart's desire,
  I do hold thee at last and strain thee close
  And kiss thee. Sweet! At last my tired heart knows
Thee for its own! Earth hath no rapture higher:
  To share with one beloved life's smiles and tears
  Through all the long procession of the years.

WONDERLAND.

The buttercups are bursting into blossom,
  As yellow as the sunlight do they flare,
And violets uplifting their blue petals
  Are thrilling with their scent the balmy air.
The flowers, dear, their queen demand:
Come, for the world is wonderland.

Above us bends a calm and cloudless azure,
  Beneath us rolls a sea of emerald bloom,
The birds with merry love-notes chant in chorus,
  And orchards pink with blossom breathe perfume.
Let us not, love, from bliss be banned:
Come, for the world is wonderland.

The honey-bees are humming in the clover,
  The blue-birds dart and dip on tireless wing,
The meadow-larks are soaring up to heaven,—
  Ah, earth's a matchless dream in early Spring.
Dearest, with me hand in hand,
Come, for the world is wonderland.

A MEMORY.

We glide along the still lagoon
  And hear the vast orchestral strain,—
Tannhauser's prelude; loud the tune,
  Then lost in mists of pain.
Above us shines the transfiguring moon.
  Dreaming we sit, nor speak again.

The gondoliers row silently
  Adown the starlit water ways,
A myriad lights flash glitteringly
  Wherever we direct our gaze,
But she is outlined duskily—
  A shade!—while faint the music plays.

It voices yearning beyond speech—
  The Pilgrim Chorus's refrain!—
Our hearts it fetters each to each,
  That mystical orchestral strain;
And hand seeks hand as if to reach
  Love's peace through all life's pain.

GOOD-BY!

Heart of me, I love you,
And, heart of me, I pray
God may take in His care
  Safely on your way.
May He bring you happily
  Home unto your own.
Dear, how I shall long for you,
  Left behind alone!

May He guide you graciously
  By His kind decrees,
May He lead you pleasantly
  Into paths of peace.
I would have Him keep you
  All the coming year,
Whereso'er you chance to be—
  This my prayer, dear!

Heart of me, I love you,
  And heart of me, I pray
He may give you back to me
  Safely some glad day.

GOOD-BY!

He who knows the need of love
  Will not my need deny;
God be with you everywhere,
  Dear, is my "good-by"!

A MIDNIGHT GREETING.

My lady resteth sweetly at this hour,
  Wrapped in the hushed oblivion of sleep,
  While angel guardians tireless vigil keep
To comfort her with happy dreams for dower.
Peace now is hers, my own tired lady's dear.
  Worn by long toil and days devoid of rest
  And hard heart-struggles, she at last is blest
With sweet and calm repose far, far from here.
Go, little song, speed swiftly on light wing
  To the white bed whereon my love doth lie,
  And softly, softly, whisper her that I,
Far in the West, forgetting everything
  Save her dear self, thus send my love to her.
  Go, little song, and may she smile and stir!

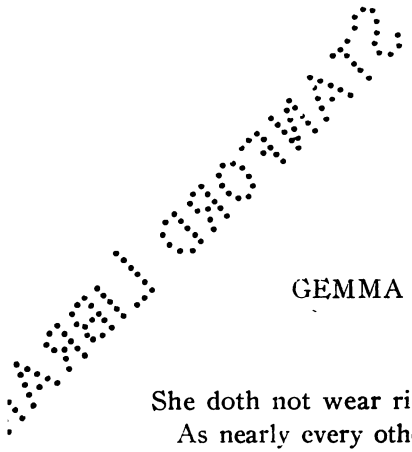
WITH A WILD ROSE FOR "ROSALIND."

Dainty wild-rose, go to her—
  Fragile flower and very fair—
Yet I dare, my rose, aver
  You will find a fairer there.

No wild flower is fragranter
  In the woodland anywhere,
Yet what sweetness you confer
  May not with my Sweet compare.

Your petals, delicate-tinted, stir
  Memories of all things rare
And lovely, yet far lovelier
  Mem'ries of her my heart doth wear.

Go, little wild-rose unto her,
  And my love to my true love bear,
Dainty are you, yet daintier
  My Rosalind you'll find, I swear.



GEMMA GEMMARUM.

I.

She doth not wear rich ornaments, my love,
  As nearly every other woman doth,
  Only a crimson rosebud, nothing loath,
Nestles her purely-beating heart above.
No glittering rings, nor brooch, nor treasure trove
  Of flashing diamonds in her soft brown hair,
  One only rose with odor sweet and rare
Adorns the tresses of my own true love.
Simple she is and ever simply dressed,
  Not gaudily attired in vestments fine,
  But O my love, no gracious heart like thine
E'er beat within another woman's breast!
  That is a jewel doth become thee well:
  No other need'st to hold me by its spell.

II.

And yet, dear heart, the best were not too good
  Of polished gold and gems beyond compare,
  Though they bedim rather than make more fair
Thy potent charm of gracious womanhood.
But just one other jewel should'st thou wear
  Upon that faultless hand I fain would hold:
  A tiny slender circlet of strong gold,
Type of the stanch love that our hearts must bear,
And set therein a pure white stone, aglow
  With ceaseless scintillations whose release
  Types the exhaustless joy and the great peace
(White peace!) which only mutual trust may know.
  Dear, wear the ring that I have given thee,
  That and thy heart thy sole adornments be!

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QUESTIONING.

A tremor seizes on me when I touch
  My dear one's hand, and when I hear her voice
  My very inmost being doth rejoice
And thrill with all love-longing—all too much!

And sometimes when in bending over her
  I breathe the fragrance of her dusky hair,
  Such yearning just to stroke it once is there
Within my soul that I can scarce defer.

She is my source of strength and from her eyes
  Of all quick-pulsing life I drink my fill:
  As an exhaustless spring I seek them still
And one sweet draught exalts and vivifies.

Then why, O God! must love like this, denied
By dread disease, still starve unsatisfied?

MY THOUGHT OF THEE.

My thought of thee, dear heart, is as a dower
  Of infinite courage, lifting me above
  The rasp and fret of hourly pain, for love
Beyond all else begets the sense of power.

My thought of thee, dear heart, is as a charm,
  A talisman such as knights were wont to wear,
  And thou, beloved, my Queen of Beauty fair—
My Summoner to bravely front all harm.

My thought of thee, dear heart, is as a prayer,
  Giving me faith in high, abiding things,
  Thrilling my heart with holy visionings,
Bridging the dreary leagues from Here to There.

My thought of thee, dear heart, what is it not
Of all that's good?—Thank God, I've ne'er forgot!

MOODS AND MEMORIES

"For a dream cometh through the multitude of business."
—Ecclesiastes, V. 3.

MOODS.

I.

Our deeds how petty, though our dreams are great!
  In the fierce maelstrom of a boisterous world
  Our fragile barks all aimlessly are whirled—
Only disasters our best ventures wait.
Our dream? A treacherous phantom of our sleep!
  The while the shrill winds wail or hoarsely rage,
  In futile hope of final harborage,
Vainly we drift o'er life's uncharted deep.
And fear is ours, thou terrible strange Sea,
  Mother of Death and hideous creeping things
  That writhe and crawl in slimy clamberings
Over dead forms—we fear thy mystery.
We cannot conquer a resistless Fate—
Our deeds how petty, though our dreams are great!

II.

Our deeds are petty, but our dreams how great!
  What though our barks are impotently whirled,
  Are we not mariners of a venturous world;
Shall we not front the foam-splurge, free, elate,
Let the waves roll, and let the shrill winds cry?
  Yes, all this rampant tumult of the sea
  To us shall only a glad challenge be
Which we will answer unreluctantly!
Bare we our bosoms to the wintry deep!
  Who knows what waits us o'er the utmost verge?
  Ride the uncurbed and wildly plunging surge,
Where men are mounted, vainly doth it leap.
  Free-willed are we, free-willed in spite of Fate—
  Our deeds are petty, but our dreams how great!

OUR NEED

What a sad, mad sight is our frenzied strife for
The toys of earth! How we barter life for
Tinsel and trash, and money and power—
Baubles that pass with the passing hour!
What covetous worrying to obtain
That which brings but bitterness if we gain,
And all the while as we grab—or give—
Neglect Life's art of arts—**to live!**

How we sell our selves for some transient pleasure
And trample under our feet the treasure
Priceless, indeed, yet to all men free
Who would place above the **to have—to be!**
How we strain and struggle and grovel and groan
To gain possessions "all our own"—
Riches or glory it matters not!—
While our brother's need is left forgot.

Are we not fools when we deem him shirk
Who refuses to sell his soul to WORK—
WORK, which we moderns enshrine as God,
Baring our backs to its scourging rod,

OUR NEED.

Gathering and squandering things that seem
With never a glimpse, through their dust, of the gleam
Which alone shall goal to our strivings give?
We have learned to WORK—Lord, help us LIVE!

"THE BLUE FLOWER."

BLUE FLOWER, compact of sky and fire,
  Goal of my high endeavor,
Fair object of my heart's desire,
  Fain would I clasp thee ever!

Long since I felt behind my all
  Became a world-wide rover,
That ere thine azure petals fall
  I might their charms discover.

And ever as thou beckonest me
  From far hill-slope or hollow,
My heart anew is fixed on thee
  And after still I follow.

I hasten where thy splendors gleam
  (Vain haste!) from hour to hour;
Mere phantom from the Realms of Dream
  Men say thou art, BLUE FLOWER!

But I who often see thee shine,
  Bright visitant elysian
Whose beauty nerves these limbs of mine,
  I know thou'rt no false vision.

O mystic bloom of flame and sky,
  I follow though I tire:
I may not find thee till I die,
  But then—my heart's desire!

A SONG FOR STANFORD.

Strength of us, soul of us, mind of us, heart of us,
  Stanford, our Stanford, we owe much to thee,
Many an impulse to good that is part of us,
  Mother, thou gavest. Thy children are we!

To our numbed spirits did'st bring liberation,
  Bidding each build for himself his own soul.
Shall we, then, shrink from a full consecration?—
  That were ill-seeming in us thus made whole!

Truth was thy portion for all that did yearn for her—
  Truth, the supreme setter-free of mankind;
Wisdom also unto them that dared turn to her
  (Dark are her ways unto them that are blind!)

What, then, thy guerdon for all thou hast done for us,
  Loosing so many from gyves of the slave?—
This! What our Stanford so stalwartly won for us
  We must pass on—freely give as she gave.

A SONG FOR STANFORD.

SPIRIT OF STANFORD, the glad and the dauntless,
May thy sons aid in the spread of the Light,
Tolerance, Sacrifice, Beauty, while, vauntless,
Quietly tread they the pathway of Right!

THE WORK OF THY HANDS.

Is this then the work of thy hands,
  This wreckage and carnage and flame?
Was it thy will this havoc that wrought
  To herald the might of thy Name?

If so, we should curse Thee, O God,
  Omnipotent ev'n as Thou art;
Defiant, in anguish and scorn,
  Blaspheme Thee, with hate in our heart.

We'd cringe not, nor craven with fear
  Implore Thee,—our lips should be mute!
But proud in our impotence stand,
  Nor kneel to the Power of the Brute.

But this is not thy work, O God!
  Not thine are the earthquake and fire,
Our Father, and Helper, and Friend,
  Destruction is not thy desire,

But Brotherhood, Sympathy, Love!
  And whereso the children of men
Show these to their fellows, we find,
  Our Lord and our God, Thee again.

Glad, generous, brave as of yore,
  The Soul of the City still stands.
It is here that we find Thee, O God,
  This, this, is the work of thy hands!

San Francisco, April, 1906.

LARGESS.

God must have smiled when He made it so,
  Our glorious home in the Golden State;
Some angel-jest having quickened a glow
  Even beyond that love so great
Which ever broods o'er the sons of men;
  For why may not God sometime, elate,
More than bountiful, prodigal then,
  Leaning forth from the crystal gate,
Have lavished his largess without alloy
  Of the grief and want and storm and woe
Wherewith elsewhere he tempers the joy
  Of his gifts to men? Ah, surely so
To CALIFORNIA he gave her dower
  Of fertile valleys and far-lifted hills,
Of tilth and vineyard, of fruit and flower,
  Of boisterous surges and light-rippled rills.
God must have smiled when He leaned Him o'er
And lavished the best of his Heaven—and more!

RECEPTIVITY.

I waited in the dusk for her,
  The crescent moon hung low,
The last faint flush had faded out
  Of twilight's afterglow.

I caught the scent of orchard bloom
  On the still evening air—
Delicate fragrance thrilling me
  Like breath of lavender.

With forehead bared and heart at peace
  I leaned against the bars,
And worshiped like the Chaldee seers
  The splendor of the stars.

One glorious planet throbbed and burned.
  All palpitant with light.
(Surely some kindred feeling stirred
  The bosom of the night!)

I waited in the dusk for her,
  Receptive lay my soul;
And all the beauty of the world
  Into my being stole.

"FAITH OF OUR FATHERS, LIVING STILL."

God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

The glories of that inextinguishable flame
Of faith which Christ left to His followers,
I fain would frame in fitting terms. But no!
Who dare attempt an effort such as this,
Remembering the martyrs of old times—
Such men as Stephen or the saintly Paul,
Himself the best exponent of such faith,
Yet failing utterly to compass that,
As he confesses (though in noblest phrase),
That which the Christ alone, incarnate God,
The veritable WORD, hath uttered forth.
I fail. And who would not? When even they,
The holy martyrs, caught but gleams of Truth,—
The starry Galileo from his tower,—
Albeit the Church herself was false to it.
Yet Truth is mighty and it shall prevail.
Though creeds may crumble and the Church herself.
We stand on Truth, we Protestants, nor yield,
Though shattered into dust each idol lies

That once we cherished wrongly as true God.
Truth is our birthright from those men of faith
Who in her darkest hour dared to defy
Ecclesiastic pomp and all its power,
And dauntless stood for man's inviolate Will.
What need to call that roll? And yet 'tis well!—
Savonarola, Bruno, Luther, Huss;
Wiclif, and Tindale, and the youthful Frith;
Immortal Latimer and Ridley;—yea,
Fisher and More I mention, though you gasp,
"Were these not Catholics?" I grant you so.
Yet are they peers of all who forfeit life
For that which doth surpass mere life—heart's faith!
This sealed they with their very blood—all these,
In sudden death.

"But are there martyrs none
In these degenerate days?" I answer, Yes,
Not hesitant: True martyrs that would die
Gladly, if need were, for the faith that Christ
Delivered once unto the saints. But now,
Since ax and stake are impotent, they live—
—A nobler matter infinitely!—for Christ's cause:
For seeking out the Truth that makes men free,
(Fearing nor priest nor prelate in their scorn,
Nor glowering lust, nor skulking truckling sin,
Nor clutching greed, nor Pharisaic pride),

And daily doing deeds of selfless love
That martyrs of old time scarce dared perform.
For in this glorious age wherein we live
To save one's own soul 's merely pitiful:
One needs must save as well some brother-man.
  So are there martyrs still in these our days
Who feel the imperishable flame of faith
Warming their hearts to deeds of holy love.
But doth some troubled skeptic doubt me here?
Be not Elijahs, brethren, deeming all
Our good earth rotten to the very core!
For martyrs' blood is still the Church's seed
And Truth shall still prevail, though all the forms
We reverence vanish. What doth God require
But that we justly do and mercy love,
And walk with Him and help our fellow-men?
Daily more brightly burns the eternal flame
In all their hearts who strive to uplift mankind!

THE LEPERS.

In some quaint mediaeval tome I've read—
Black-lettered and illumined, gray with dust,
Its ponderous clasp mottled with mould and rust—
That lepers in past ages, banished
To hideous exile from society,
Were given bells (grim irony!) and, mewed
In desolate tracts of desert solitude,
Warned passers-by of their proximity.

And as I pondered o'er the antique scroll,
Methought the legend an apt parable
Of this our life. Doth not each bear his bell,
Craving companionship for a lonely soul?
Yet, though their tones plead for Love's tenderness,
We tread our paths alone, estranged and comfortless.

THOSE WASTED DAYS.

Last night I waked, having dreamed I saw the days—
Those wasted days!—spent idly in my life,
Or foolishly, when, faltering in the strife,
I paused in midst of toil to hear men's praise.
And in my dream those days beset me round—
Those wasted days!—and when I sought to scale
The heights to heaven they did me assail
Implacably, and pinned me to the ground.

And I—what could I do? For ev'n when oft
From out their clutch my soul I wrested free,
Still grim, persistent, they did follow me
To Heaven's very gate, and grinned and scoffed
Till from before the Master's pitying face
I slunk rebuked—damned by those wasted days!

THE UNFINISHED TEMPLE

My virgin soul for her a temple built
  Whereto she might retire and be at ease,
  And there she knelt in instant prayer to please
Him who for her his precious blood had spilt.
So thought my soul to cleanse her from all stain,
  For in this temple was not any sin,
  Nor any unclean thing might enter in
Her from her constant orisons to restrain.

Thus kept my soul secure from earthly taint:
  Yet she that was of evil more affright
  Than ever was austerest eremite
Within those temple walls grew strangely faint.
  For this was lacking in that paradise:
  No altar stood therein for sacrifice!

BETHEL.

We may climb if we will in good time to earth's highest and best,
Be we zealous to work and to wait, to push on and to rest
At the seasons appointed; undaunted and steadfast of will
We may lift us at length unto summits ne'er trodden until
Our feet had first pressed them. But when on earth's ultimate height
We stand in our triumph, what then? Shall the beckoning light
That lures us with glory supernal afar and afar
Into realms of that infinite space wherein star calls to star
But mock us? And all of our wearisome striving but go
To prove us deluded mad dreamers of dreams? Ah, not so!
'Tis by ladders of dream that alone the heights of the highest we scale;

BETHEL.

On the Wings of the Spirit we mount where the feet of the body must fail,
All-confident, fearless, and glad while the welcoming angels cry "HAIL!"

COUPLETS.

I.

Let honors as they may befall,
So Honor but abide through all.

II.

What good to any man his creed,
If he ignore a neighbor's need?

III.

No one should expect if his ethics are tainted,
Himself for right doctrines alone to be sainted.

IV.

Our deeds still journey with us from afar,
And what we have been lives in what we are.

V.

Despite of sense, still lives a silent trust
That day will dawn, that man is more than dust.

TWELVE QUATRAINS.

I.

SOLITUDE.

In the midst of the music and laughter,
The holiday tumult and stir,
My heart, all a'weary and lonely,
Yearns—how much!—for one fond look from her.

II.

THE SOLUTION.

Ah, after all, 'tis only Love
For which the tired heart cares;
Learning and Wealth and Fame but prove,
At last, delusive snares.

III.

HOW VAST THE DISTANCE.

How vast the distance that divides the dead
From those still living. Yet it seems as naught
To that which intervenes between those wed,
Whom Love hath never in true union wrought.

IV.

TO A FREE THINKER.

Ay, thou art free—too free with thy bold lips,
  Busied with shattering life's sweet sanctities
And making faith darken in drear eclipse.
  O Spirit that Denies, my curse for this!

V.

THE ABIDING CREED.

Like the Lord Christ to live thine own life well,
And, spite of skeptic sneer and laughter, still
Like Him ye love to render good for ill:
This is one creed that stands immutable.

VI.

AFTERMATH.

What fruitage this from Death and Scorn!
  Naught can restrain the quickened soul,
  Nor stay it from its glorious goal,
Nor rob it of its Easter Morn.

VII.

CHASTISEMENT.

Who hath no need of pain
  To chasten and control,
God pity him, for he must be
  Dwarfed and infirm of soul.

VIII.

DESERT VISION.

Happy who sees with onward-straining eyes,
  Beyond the mud-hut of life's sordid real,
Though blinded by the brazen desert skies,
  The radiant snow-peaks of his soul's ideal.

IX.

THE EPITAPH.

One who, when wearied with the strife for place,
  And earth's unending toil and stern duress,
Became enamored of Death's placid face,
  Wooed her, and fell asleep of her caress.

X.

ENDEAVOR.

Who use not lose their strength to use,
  We may not hoard our powers,
For what we keep is lost to us,
  But what we give is ours.

XI.

THE IDEAL.

In every poet-soul rings one refrain
Ne'er to be heard by the unheeding train;
And every artist in his heart of heart
Treasures one face beyond the touch of Art.

XII.

THE UNCONTROLLED.

Three things, nay rather four, there be
  Beyond man to control:
Heaven's stars, the persistent-scarping sea,
  Death, and his own indomitable soul.

SLEEPLESS.

Sleep, O my God, send sleep!
I can endure
Disease that knows no cure,
If Thou grant sleep.

Even as I sowed, I reap:
I ask not hope,
Nor dread with Death to cope,
But, Oh, give sleep!

Forms, fearsome, 'round me creep
While night drags on,
Come *thou*, Oblivion,
Complete, in sleep!

Oblivion, dull and deep,—
Nought else I crave:
Dreams, nor to cheat the grave.
This only—sleep!

Lord, Thy beloved dost keep
When day is done;
Why may not I be one,
Dear God—and sleep?

FROM THE SICK ROOM.

Teach me, Father, how to be
Patient in my misery.
If the day be blank and drear
Dragging out its slow career,
Shall the night not come again
With its kind release from pain?
Or if on my couch I toss
Shall I count it such a cross
That the long night watches creep,
Knowing thou dost thy vigil keep,
And that thy calm morning light
Follows our most fretful night?

In this close room from dusk till dawn
All alone, with curtains drawn,
Shutting out the sun and sky,
It is tiresome, Lord, to lie.
Yet shall I murmur when I find
A Presence fresher than the wind,
And fairer than the evening star,
And sweeter than wood violets are,

FROM THE SICK ROOM.

What are loneliness and pain
If I find thee, Lord, again?
Father, may I learn to be
Patient in my misery.

FAILURE.

Life is made up of broken bars
  Whose notes discordant ring;
Like children who would clutch the stars
  We fail in everything.

And yet do not the futile dream,
  The ideal never won,
The evanescent, mystic gleam
  Still lure us up and on?

Surely the heights we vainly scan,
  The hopes wherein we fail,
Have place within the cosmic plan
  Of Him behind the veil.

Our striving is its own reward,
  E'en though we ne'er attain;
In failure may we find Thee, Lord,
  And learn our loss is gain!

Somehow, somewhere—though how or where
  Our eyes not yet may see—
The work we mar shall be made fair
  And perfected by Thee.

VICTOR.

He knows, and sometime we shall also know.
Although we drift storm-tossed by doubts and fears,
And only see the wrecks of wasted years,
The markings of His chart shall clearer grow.
Who, hushing self, can say, "Thy will be done,"
Is noblest conqueror; echoing huzzas
He needs not, nor the laurel: his applause
Lies in the consciousness of victory won,
Who lifts his face faith-radiant to the skies,
And makes himself triumphant o'er the hot
Heart-passions and vain questionings that seize
And throttle what is holiest—he is wise.
Master thy doubts! Life's proudest fields are not
Her Marathons, but her Gethsemanes.

DE IMITATIONE CHRISTI.

Do thou grant me, O God, to speak the word that is
helpful and wise,
To do the thing that is right, no matter what hard-
ships arise;
Do thou smite me down if I slack in the work thou
wouldst have me to do,
Or cringe to the mighty and false, ignoring the good
and the true;
Do thou scorch with the flame of thy scorn all traces
of selfhood away,
To the end that my deeds may be just and potent
the prayers that I pray;
And in all that I speak or perform, dear Lord, be it
ever to thee
That I look both for praise and for blame, intent on
thy purpose with me!

THE NEW EARTH.

It shall come, the glorious dawning
  Of that better time to be,
When no longer, cringing, fawning,
  Man shall stand erect and free.
Each shall think then of the other—
  Think not how to make him tool
For some selfish end, but brother:
  Seek to rescue, not to rule!

Songs of labor shall take place of
  Muffled curses, roll of drum,
Men no longer share disgrace of
  Bloody bayonet, deadly bomb.
Nation shall not war on nation,
  Mankind shall advance as one;
Peace shall reign—blest consummation!—
  Blot out deeds of carnage done.

It shall come, the prophets' vision,
  Poets' dream of selfless life,
Long a theme for fools' derision,—
  Glad cessation from all strife.

THE NEW EARTH.

All the miseries of oppression,
  Mocking spectres of despair,
Squalor, deadening toil, privation,
  All shall perish.—"When and where?"

This you ask me, comrade, rightly!—
  When the shackled Soul of Man,
Now dumb-driven, inert, unsightly,
  Dares its clarion call, "I can!"
"Where?" Wherever, unifying,
  Toilers take their stand at last
Stanch in fellowship, defying
  Their grim tyrants of the past.

It shall come! A new creation
  For mankind shall be unrolled,
And in Christ-like consecration
  Souls shall count for more than gold.
Then our dreams of God the Father
  And the Brotherhood of Man
We shall find not dreams, but rather
  Pentecost on earth again!

Ignorance, greed, and lust outspoken,
  Fetters all that bind mankind,
Shall in that good time be broken,
  Freeing body, spirit, mind.

THE NEW EARTH.

"When will this relief be given,"
Would you ask me, brothers dumb?—
Not in some far-distant heaven,
Strive we—here on earth—'t will come!

"THE QUICK AND THE DEAD."

Who with his fellows hath no lot,
  No potency for good or ill,
  No place another might not fill,
Is dead, although he knows it not.

But he who shared the common lot,
  Some little place was glad to fill,
  And moved some heart for good or ill,
Though dead, lives on, long unforgot.

A PRAYER.

These things I covet, Lord, and pray
That thou wilt grant them me some day:
The will to do and the strength to bear,
High hope in man, firm faith in prayer;
Work's joy, home's peace when work is through,
With love of a woman, leal and true;
And children, too, if thy will it be,
To prattle upon their father's knee;
And a heart where love shall be all in all.
If these things may to my fortune fall,
No more at thy bounteous hands I'll crave
But a clean, strong life and an honored grave;
That I may be mourned by my fellows, Lord,
As a good man gone to his just reward.

WHEN I LIE DYING.

When I lie dying, I would have no tears,
  No noiseful wailing nor the wringing of hands
  To mark my setting forth to unknown lands,
For all must go with passing of the years.
Rather a word of cheer from each to all,
  Congratulatory, as of one who fares
  On brave adventures bent and gladly dares
Dire perils if but noble occasions call.
Still, if one doth hold fast persistent grief
  At loss of me, nor aught may ease his pain,
  This would I urge could I but speak again:
"Haste thou to bring some brother man relief.
  So shalt most soon thy sore wound cease to feel;
  Who heals another's hurt, his own doth heal."

THE ANSWER.

"What art thou, Life?" The query ceasless went
From lip to lip, unsolved, in ages past.
That riddle to the dumb, unanswering vast
Of desert night the Hebrew patriarchs sent.
In restless Athens wise men curious sought
To solve the same enigma. Caesars proud,
O'er all their imperial splendors felt the cloud
Brooding, of whence and whither. They had bought
Gladly an answer, at expense of all
That glorious pomp of Rome for which they strove,
But pondered vainly. Then in Bethlehem's stall
Was born the Babe, of lowliest parentage,
Who to the mystery that perplexed the sage
For myriad years, made answer: "Life is Love!"

EVEN AS A MOTHER.

Even as a mother oft is fain to hide
  Herself sometimes from her beloved child,
  Who, missing the dear face that on him smiled,
First seeks, then fears, then wholly terrified
Runs here and there, and, without her to guide,
  Stumbles and falls—then feels himself entwined
  Suddenly by her arms and sees her kind,
Sweet face above him, and is satisfied;
Even so, our Father, thou dost oft conceal
  Thyself from us a little while, and lo!
  Thy children stumble blindly to and fro,
And weep, or curse (O God!), or cease to feel.
  Why fail they, Lord, to see thou art not gone,
  But merely prov'st, in thy great Love, their own?

MORS IMPOTENS.

Could I but write some word that should recall
  One driven from the harbor of his hope,
  Enheartening him more valiantly to cope
Against the spiritual buffetings that befall;
Or by one act of mine inspire a sense
  Of love and of love's everlastingness,
  Thus quelling hatreds that so oft suppress
Faith in the Holy Spirit's immanence;
Could I bequeath, though through long sufferings,
That which would lift our sordid world along
To life more holy and diviner song,
And trust in Him whose law encompasseth
This seeming lawless clash and swirl of things—
Then were thy terrors impotent, O Death!

ALPHA AND OMEGA.

"Fecisti nos ad te, et cor nostrum inquietum est donec requiescat in te."
—Augustine.

Long had I pondered over many things,
For men once men may not at rest remain.
I strove to calm my riotous heart in vain,
All clamorous with importunate questionings;
So many problems that perforce arise,
So many mysteries of life and time,
Perplexities and conflicts, thoughts sublime
And thoughts ignoble must it harmonize.
Doctrines and dogmas tossed it to and fro,
The direful strife between free will and fate,
The fond desire to know the ultimate—
Futile today as in the long ago.
But now, dear Lord, that old unrest hath died:
Since I have found thee, there is naught beside.

"SHALL THE IMMORTAL DIE?"

Before the heavens, O thou Soul of mine,
  Were star-bestudded, ere, from chaos planned,
  God summoned forth the waters and the land,
Didst thou exist, immortal and divine.
Behind the memories of this earthly strife
  Thou hadst thy being in infinity
  And only as infinite can I think of thee,
Whose very self affirms eternal life.
What then, O Soul, if Death relentlessly
Doth ready make to hurl his fatal dart,
Shalt thou in that dread peril have thy part,
Or shalt unharmed follow thy flying goal?
My body he may vanquish. But, O Soul,
Defy thou Time, nor fear Mortality.

"IF IT WERE ONLY A DREAM."

If it were only a dream,
  Were it not well to cherish
Faith which refuses to deem
  Us one with the beasts that perish?
If it were only a dream,
  Were it not well to keep
Hope which illumes with its gleam
  The murk where the death mists creep?

If it were only a dream—
  This of the riven tomb—
Should we not foster the beam
  Lighting the grave and its gloom?
If it were only a dream—
  Ah, but it is not so!
In our best moments we seem
  Not merely to trust, but to know!

HORIZONS.

"Whither?" I asked of the laughing child,
As he danced along by some dream beguiled.
"Nay, hinder me not," was his eager call,
"For Fairyland lies just over the wall!"

"Whither?" I asked of the stalwart youth,
As he jostled the throng without pause or ruth.
"Who climbs to yon mountain's topmost rim,
El Dorados there are awaiting him!"

"Whither?" I questioned the aged saint,
Wayfarer still, though bent and faint.
"I follow the light of yon setting star,
And beyond, where the loved of the Homeland are!"

EVEN AS HERE, SO THERE.

Just a little longer
  Here I have to stay
Ere the Voice shall call me,
  Call me far away.

Whither, Lord, I wonder
  Shall Thy new mission be,
To what strange dominion,
  What untraversed sea?

What credentials given,
  Or chart to keep from fear;
Or will it be yonder
  Even as 'twas here:—

Strength not found but fought for,
  Grace hard-earned, not given,
Vigilance our only hope
  Even there in heaven?

Under sealed orders,
  Faith our only word,
Sailing blithely forward,
  Lo, we trust thee, Lord!

EVEN AS HERE, SO THERE

Seek we not as guerdon
  Rest, although well-won:
Grant us still the will to strive
  On, and always on!

I MUST GO SOFTLY.

I must go softly all my days.
  No more the ready leap
  To breast the storm, or brave the deep,
  Or scale the unconquered steep,
But strengthless o'er life's flat monotonous ways,
I must go softly all my days.

I must go softly all my days.
  Never again for me
  The splendid glory of the free
  Brave life that used to be,
Glad effort's thrill that for all effort pays.
I must go softly all my days.

I must go softly all my days.
  O heart, keep strong and sweet,
  Nor fear, save cowardly retreat!
  Lord, guide my laggard feet,
And lead them still in thine appointed ways.
I must go softly all my days.

IMMORTALITY.

Ofttimes at sea, across the waters gray,
I've watched the wavering far horizon line
Where the calm sky meets the unresting brine,
How ever at fixed distance it doth stay!
Hour after hour the good ship ploughs her way,
With quivering prow and engines pulsing fast,
Yet never is that dim line overpast,
Nor is that space diminished day by day.

And thus methought: When this our life's rough stream
With death's calm dome shall seem to meet and merge,
May we not find that meeting all a dream,
And o'er some vast and immemorial surge,
While yet beyond our ken great waters gleam,
Sail on, and on,—nor find an utmost verge!

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